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Better and better

Organizer pleased to see continued growth of Plymouth Ice Festival

Again this year, James Gietzen is excited about the Plymouth Ice Festival.

This is the fifth year Gietzen, owner of JAG Entertainment, has been producing the event and he admits to a sense of pride in the growth and improvement he has seen at the event.

"When we started out, things were a little chaotic," Gietzen said. "I sort of felt like we were a jet plane without a pilot. We were basically just trying to keep the festival together and going. Now, it is streamlined and running much more smoothly."

"We have lists, we have charts, everyone knows their job and things are running pretty well."

Gietzen has a dedicated group of volunteers who work to ensure that the event operates without problems, too, and he admits that he is a "very



James Gietzen

hands-on" manager.

Even with his attention to detail, however, the one thing he cannot influ-

ence is the weather:

"That is the one thing we cannot control," Gietzen said. "Ideally, we would like it to be about 35 degrees and even a little overcast, but we just never know. Right now, the predictions look good."

This year, Gietzen said one way to defeat any less-than-perfect weather will be the new Tubing Run sponsored by DTE Energy. The 100-foot run will be located on Ann Arbor Trail between Main Street and Union. This event, Gietzen said, will thwart the weather no matter what Mother Nature sends.

"The run is a synthetic material they put down, so no matter what, there will be fun for everybody," he said, of the inner tube sledding run.

See **Festival**, page 2



Plymouth Ice Festival

Festival from page 1

This year, sledders can enjoy the run for \$5 all day or \$2 a ride.

Miss Michigan USA, Elizabeth Johnson, who lives in Plymouth, will be visiting the festival, too, Gietzen said. She and Miss Michigan Teen USA Anane Loveday will be in the Hot Spot in The Gathering from 3 until 5 p.m. Saturday to sign autographs and pose for photos and answer visitors' questions.

"She said she is looking forward to it and she lives here in Plymouth, so she is familiar with the Ice Festival," Gietzen said.

Again this year, Gietzen said that he expects from 75,000 to 100,000 people to visit the event.

"This is still the largest Ice Festival in the state," he said. "Other communities have tried it and many of them include snow sculptures, but we stick



Elizabeth Johnson

completely to ice."

That includes more than 300 blocks of ice, each weighing about 300 pounds that are put into the hands of 15 pro-

fessional carvers, who turn out the artistic creations that fill the downtown area.

"Many of these guys started here in Plymouth, this is where they learned to carve," Gietzen said, "so there is a feeling of nostalgia for the community and the town."

The carvers are a community of their own and enjoy the Plymouth festival because they see old friends at the event.

"They share tools, tips, they have a real feeling of camaraderie," Gietzen said.

There will be another 30 or so competitive carvers in the community during the festival competing in Kellogg Park in various contests, including the Chain Saw Challenge.

Gietzen said that most visitors to the Ice Festival do not realize that it is any entirely sponsor-driven event.

"We get no money from the city.



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Plymouth Ice Festival



This event is funded 100 percent by the sponsors and we start asking for sponsorships for the next year the day after the festival ends.”

Gietzen said that once a business becomes a sponsor, they usually never drop out.

“They get a huge return on this.

This is a unique experience for people to come out and interact with their brands. They always return, and we appreciate their help,” he said.



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Festival offers merchants extra boost in business

Julie Brown
Special Writer

Gary Atkinson, who owns Plymouth's Three Dog Bakery on Forest Avenue with his wife and son, looks forward to the Plymouth Ice Festival each year.

"I get increased volume over that three-day period," said Atkinson. "A lot of people will bring their dogs down, so it's a nice place to warm up. We try to keep some extra treats on hand. It's very dependent on the weather. We hope for cold, but not too cold and no rain."



See **Business**, page 6

Gary and Nate Atkinson of Three Dog Bakery

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Business from page 5

The Atkinson family has had the business, which sells dog and cat treats, food, gift items, animal birthday cakes and more, for six and a half of its 12 years. They track Ice Festival sales and are pleased and looking forward to this year's Jan. 12-14 festival in Plymouth.

Said Wes Graff, president of the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce, "It's one of the best weekends for the winter."

The Ice Festival, which brings ice carvers and many activities to town each year, gives local businesses a boost during a traditionally slower post-holiday time. Graff notes restaurant evening parties are a big draw, such as the one at E.G. Nicks which has a tent and bands.

"It also drives people into stores," he said. "They go into stores and do a little poking around. It makes January a better month for everybody. I know it's much better than a regular weekend could ever be."

Graff noted the Sun & Snow store, which sells winter merchandise from the corner of Ann Arbor Trail and Main, does well, as do specialty food shops.

One such shop is U.P. Pasties/Plymouth General Store on Forest, owned by Kim Kelp for around eight years.

"It does very well for the pastie business," said Kelp. Her business sells hot and frozen pasties during Ice Festival both from the store and from a booth in Kellogg Park.

"We do thousands and thousands of pasties out of here, hot and cold," she said of the festival. New this year for U.P. Pasties/Plymouth General Store during the festival will be smoked giant turkey legs at both locations.

Kelp does a warming station at the store location only with s'mores for the festival. "It's really not a slow time of year for us," she noted. "The pastie business is doing great. We love the Ice Festival."

She's from the Upper Peninsula Copper Harbor, and really appreciates festival organizers and their hard work. "It's a wonderful show," said Kelp. "Everybody comes from all over."

Plymouth City Manager Paul Sincock is a veteran of many festivals. "I think it's a huge economic boon. You see a huge economic impact," Sincock said.

That includes restaurants and area hotels, he added. USA Hockey events on Beck Road at the arena also help.

"That gets into the mix, not just the central core area but the region," the city manager said. The event helps to take a down season "and turn it into a boon season."

Sincock enjoys the Ice Festival. "Even after all the years, I'm amazed at the creativity. It's just an incredible thing. I think this event has definitely put Plymouth on the map."

He noted the festival draws from Ontario, including Chatham-Kent, as well as Indiana, Ohio, western Michigan, and the Saginaw area.

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Plymouth Ice Festival

"It's had a huge impact," said Sincock, noting cost factors preclude the city doing a formal financial impact study. He admires the visiting carvers' skills.

"I can't draw a straight line with a ruler," Sincock added with a chuckle.

Both as a state representative and now Plymouth Township supervisor, Kurt Heise has helped to cut the ceremonial ice ribbon to kick off festivities.

"First of all, it's a festival that's enjoyed by our residents," said Heise. "It brings in many guests and visitors. I think there's certainly an economic benefit. More importantly, it's a unifying event. We are one community and this is a way we celebrate that."

Graff said the festival draws from all ages, including families and young adults. The evening parties "create one of the busiest weekends of the year," Graff said.

Young adults often like to watch



Kim Kelp

carving in the evening, he has found. The Chamber entertains volunteers on festival Friday at E.G. Nicks.

"We appreciate what they do and it gives us a chance to show that," Graff said. "And it's a lot of fun. It's a great way for us to reward and thank them."

He agreed some festival visitors who don't shop immediately may

return later for purchases. "You know you can go back and get it," Graff said of such shoppers.

Also enjoying the event is Tony Bruscato, director of the Plymouth Downtown Development Authority. He too likes the creativity. "The college competition is always fun," said Bruscato. "It's just fun to walk around the streets and see the sculptures."

Bruscato agreed it helps with the post-holiday lull. "It's one of the few events we have after Christmas. It brings a lot of visitors downtown. We hear that from our merchants. People have a tendency to walk around. They spend a lot of time also visiting our eating establishments," he said.

Festival weather has been unpredictable in the past.

"It's a balancing act. I've been there when it's super brutal and when it's been 50 degrees. You want something in the middle," Heise said.



Warm up Ice Festival Weekend at the Plymouth Library with

Lee Murdock

Historian and Folk Singer:
Storytelling in Song

**Saturday
January 13
2 p.m.**



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Telling a tale

Historian, folk singer to entertain at library

The Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main, will offer Plymouth Ice Festival visitors a warm spot to have some fun and enjoy some great entertainment. As in years past, the library welcomes the opportunity to connect with the community during such large-scale events.

The Ice Festival will be no exception as the library hosts two special events - one for children and one for adults, both made possible through support of the Friends of the Plymouth District Library.

At 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 13, songwriter, storyteller and historian Lee Murdock will perform in the library main meeting rooms. Known through-



Lee Murdock

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Plymouth Ice Festival

out the Great Lakes, Murdock's musical influences span generations. Those include ragtime, Irish, blues and folk styles.

"We're delighted to have him back." Murdock's work represents an anthem to those who know the Great Lakes as the freshwater highways of North America," said Library Director Carol Souchock.

Murdock's concert is offered free of charge, and no advance registration is required.

On Ice Festival Sunday, Jan. 14, from noon to 3 p.m., families are encouraged to drop in for winter crafts, maker activities, hot chocolate, coffee and fun.

"These winter events over the last few years have been a big hit," said Carol Champagne, library youth services coordinator.

"We find that folks come in and while the children enjoy the activities,



the parents enjoy visiting with neighbors and friends."

Rounding out possible Plymouth library activities are relaxing with a magazine by the fireplace during the Ice Festival, checking out a favorite old movie on DVD, browsing the Friends used book sale, putting a puzzle togeth-

er downstairs, enjoying computer games, or staging an impromptu puppet show.

The library will be open regular hours during the festival, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 13, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14. For more information, visit plymouthlibrary.org.

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Hands On Art Project-Monoprinting
Presented by College for Creative Studies
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

THE MAGIC FLUTE Presented by
Main Street Opera Theatre
2:00 pm and 4:00 pm

Dance Performance Presented by
Artistry Dance
3:15 pm

Sunday January 14th

TBD
12:30 pm

HOT CHOCOLATE AND CHUCKLES
Presented by the Mitten Theater
1:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Hands On Art Project-Monoprinting
Presented by College for Creative Studies
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

THE MAGIC FLUTE Presented by
Main Street Opera Theatre
2:00 pm and 4:00 pm

Dance Performance Presented by
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A place for the arts

Community support grows for Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex

Julie Brown
Special Writer

As president of the Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex or PARC, Don Soenen is confident about the \$30 million fundraising campaign now under way.

"We've certainly had a lot of support so far," Soenen said in a recent interview. "The idea is to raise as much money in private funds as we can. We're going to give it all we've got."

Those private sources include individuals, foundations and companies, to create a public-private partnership. Soenen acknowledges a tax hike millage request may be sought from Plymouth and Plymouth Township vot-



ers.

"The amount we're talking about here is pretty minimal," he said. He cited less than 1-mill, noting a cost if \$15

million can be raised privately equaling \$5-6 a month for an average homeowner

See **PARC**, page 12

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Plymouth Ice Festival

PARC from page 11

to pay.

"I think that's a very modest investment for the return," he said.

Plans shown in Soenen's office at PARC, the former Central Middle School at 650 Church St., show a performing arts center to seat 800, with room for 50 more theater-goers in a pinch. "I would say it's been very good," Soenen said of reaction to the theater plan. "There are certainly questions. I have not perceived any negative response from the business community."

An extensive EPIC-MRA survey in 2017 found 94 percent of city residents and 84 percent of township residents are aware of PARC. Soenen touts a stronger Detroit Institute of Arts presence locally, along with the College for Creative Studies having extensive course offerings at PARC.

"All the regional arts organizations



are very interested in coming in," including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Michigan Opera Theatre, he said. "It adds prestige to our community."

Gail Grieger, executive director of PARC, also touts the College for Creative Studies (CCS) classes, which started in October. "They've been very successful," Grieger said.

CCS courses will start up again in January, and include both a pre-college experience for youth and adult education. "All kinds of stuff that they're offering," she said.

Upcoming Young Artist short courses through CCS include digital photography and computer animation. An April

See **PARC**, page 14



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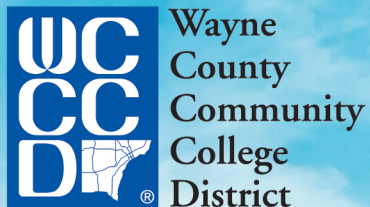
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Plymouth Ice Festival

PARC from page 12

2-6 spring break session through CCS at PARC will feature digital animation, drawing, and fashion design and sewing.

Grieger is also pleased with community support, noting that fundraising has just begun. She pointed to the joint city-township survey which showed community support.

"I think Don is very pleased with his progress," Grieger said. "We do have some commitments."

Soenen cited Plymouth Township growth, including the Five Mile corridor. "We've had a major growth of businesses coming to our community. They look for these amenities. I think this'd be a huge asset," he said.

He said the purchase, extensive infrastructure work, and renovation/preservation will cost about \$15 million. Soenen wonders about greater Plymouth in 10-15 years, as the internet greatly impacts retailing.

"I think we have a unique opportunity to make Plymouth a focal point for the arts. We are right at the heart of that," he said. Good freeway access, restaurants, local and regional arts organizations "really give us an opportunity to develop Plymouth into an arts community. It will make this community more attractive. It will increase the quality of life."

He cites spending at restaurants and other businesses.

”

*We've had a major growth
of businesses coming to our community.
They look for these amenities.
I think this'd be a huge asset.*

PARC has some 27 tenants now and is almost at capacity.

Soenen said 800 seats is optimal for the performing arts center; and there will be about 800 parking spaces. "Parking should not be an issue," he said.

The 16.6-acre site is near the Miracle League and Plymouth Cultural Center, which has an ice rink. "It really becomes almost a campus setting with the Miracle League, the Cultural Center," Soenen said. There are many uses, "all in one location. That's just unheard of in a downtown community."

"The theater is not that expensive. The operating costs for the theater are not that onerous," said Soenen. "They do say all bets are off if we don't have the theater," he added of an independent business analysis done on the project.

"I think we're in a good position" with minimal opposition to PARC, he said.



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Plymouth Ice Festival

Music, crafts, comedy will warm crowds

Those looking to come in from the cold during the Plymouth Ice Festival will find the Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex at Church and Main streets is the place to be.

"Everything is family-friendly," said PARC Executive Director Gail Grieger of the free lineup at PARC the Saturday and Sunday of the festival. "So if we have sub-zero temperatures like last year, they can get in out of the cold."

"We feel people are looking for experiences," noted Marsha Kreza, PARC marketing director who explained that the arts complex building tenants are putting on a number of fun activities during the Ice Festival:

SATURDAY, JAN. 13

- Music selections by violinist Weston Welch, 12:30 p.m.
- "Hot Chocolate and Chuckles," presented by the Mitten Theater, 1:30 and

3:30 p.m.

- Hands-on Art Project-Monoprinting, presented by the College for Creative Studies, 1-4 p.m.

- "The Magic Flute," presented by Main Street Opera Theatre, 2 and 4 p.m.

- Dance performance presented by Artistry Dance, 3:15 p.m.

SUNDAY, JAN. 14

- Strings 'n' Things youth musical ensemble, 12:30 p.m.

- "Hot Chocolate and Chuckles," presented by the Mitten Theater, 1:30 and 3:30 p.m.

- Hands-on Art Project-Monoprinting, presented by College for Creative Studies, 1-4 p.m.

- "The Magic Flute," presented by Main Street Opera Theatre, 2 and 4 p.m.

- Dance performance presented by Artistry Dance, 3:15 p.m.

In addition, PARC will host an indoor

Winter Artisans Market during the Ice Festival again this year.

"We look for some collaboration," explained Kreza of tenants participating during the Ice Festival. "We feel it's a great way to help them market their businesses as well as get the community involved."

This is the fourth Artisans Market-type event at PARC, she said, although others have had different names. One took place during the festival last year.

"Everything was very successful," Grieger said of last year.

She said that while PARC attendance during the Ice Festival is difficult to measure, she estimated about 1,500 visitors during the two days.

PARC will have free parking and ice carvings outside the building, a good reason to walk from the core downtown and park exhibits, she added.



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Plymouth Ice Festival

Schedule of events

Opening Ceremony and Ribbon Cutting

Friday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m.

Please join us as we officially open the 2018 Plymouth Ice Festival.

City of Plymouth commission members will be in attendance to help cut the ribbon and kick off the 2018 Ice Festival celebrations.

Genisys Credit Union Collegiate Ice Carving Competitions

The 2018 Plymouth Ice Festival is proud to partner with local colleges and universities to bring you the Collegiate Ice Carving Competition in Kellogg Park. Watch live carvings by talented college students as they compete to win first place in their sculpture category. All judging is done by experienced and professional judges.

Saturday: Jan. 13

College Individual Carving Competition
9 a.m. - noon. Awards at 1 p.m.

Sunday: Jan. 14

College Team Carving Competition
8 a.m. - noon. Awards at 1 p.m.

DTE Energy Foundation Tubing Run

Plymouth Ice Festival will feature, for the first time ever, more than 100 feet of pure tubing fun. Located on Ann Arbor trail between Main Street and Union, this family fun attraction is sure to be one of the most popular events at the festival this year.

DTE Energy Foundation Tubing Run Hours:

Friday: 6 until 9 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Winter Wonderland Michigan Market

Come check out Penniman Avenue for the Winter Wonderland Michigan Market. The market will feature vendors with products and food from around the Mitten State.

Market hours:

Friday: 5 until 8 p.m.
Saturday: 11 a.m. until 7 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Ally Financial Dueling Chainsaws Competition

Saturday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m.

Back by popular demand. The Ally Financial Dueling Chainsaws Competition. In this great competition ice carvers are given 15 minutes, one block, and their chainsaws to create some of the most amazing ice carvings in

the festival.

Ice Throne Presented By: Henry Ford Health System

Take a seat and feel like ice royalty on the Throne. A yearly tradition that draws in kings and queens of all ages.

The Plymouth Ice Festivals Ice Playground

Bring the kids for countless photo opportunities at the all-new attraction at the Plymouth Ice Festival. The Ice Playground is packed full of interactive ice carvings. This is simply a "must see" at the festival this year.

Family Petting Zoo

Located next to the Ice Playground, friends from Carousel Acres will be offering a hands-on experience with horses, donkeys, goats, sheep, alpaca and even a baby calf. This activity is great for kids or those that are young at heart.

Saturday: 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. - weather permitting
Sunday: 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. - weather permitting

Escape Room Experience

Escape Room Studios will be at the Plymouth Ice Festival with their vintage Airstream. Collect hidden messages, uncover cryptic clues, decipher puzzles to try and ESCAPE! Can you get out? Great for families, groups of up to six and dates.

Must pre-book or book online at

www.EscapeRoomStudios.net

Friday: 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4 p.m.,
5:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 8:30 p.m., 10 p.m.

Saturday: 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4 p.m.,
5:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 8:30 p.m., 10 p.m.

Sunday: 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m.

Interactive Ice Sculptures

Get your picture taken with some of the most amazing ice creations around. There are a number of opportunities to take a "selfie" with some remarkable and unique ice sculptures.

Community Financial Main Stage

The Community Financial Main Stage features live entertainment, awards ceremonies, presentations and music throughout the weekend of the festival.

Fire and Ice

See two basic elements of our world light up the night sky in downtown Plymouth! Fire and ice are combined to create a dazzling display beginning at approximately 7:30 p.m. on both Friday, Jan. 12 and Saturday, Jan. 13 that is sure to wow.

Towers are lit each evening and will burn for approximately 2 hours.

Plymouth Ice Festival

Plymouth Community United Way

Learn about all the things the Plymouth United Way does for the community and warm up at there Hot Cocoa Bar by stopping by their office at 960 W. Ann Arbor Trail Suite 2 on Saturday, Jan. 13.

Blue Care Network of Michigan Cross Country Zone

Presented by Sun and Snow Sports

Bring the family down to Kellogg Park for the opportunity to try cross-country skiing! Seasoned professionals will demonstrate and explain the gear and theory of cross-country skiing - and then give the kids chance to try it for themselves. This feature is open Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Hot Spot Heated By Ehlers Heating & Air Conditioning

Warm up in style at the Hot Spot, heated by Ehlers Heating and Air Conditioning. Located under The Gathering directly across from Kellogg Park. The Hot Spot features local vendors, businesses, product demonstrations, a sitting area to take a load off your feet and (most importantly) lots of heat. The Hot Spot is open during all of the official open hours of the Festival.

Meet and greet With Miss Michigan USA and Miss Michigan Teen USA.

Join Miss Michigan USA Elizabeth Johnson, a Plymouth resident, and Miss Michigan Teen USA Anane Loveday for a meet and greet from 3-5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 13. They will be hanging out in the Ehlers Hot Spot to take photos, talk with fans, and sign autographs.

DFCU Financial Lights the Ice

The Plymouth Ice Festivals Ice Garden becomes even more magical at night, as the ice carvings glow with color. Join DFCU Financial and the Plymouth Ice Festival, each night as they Light The Ice. We will flip the switch during the opening ceremony at 7 p.m. Jan. 12.

PARC Warming Station,

Winter Artisans Market and Free Family Activities

Feelin' frozen? Find your way out of the cold and into PARC - The Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex, located at the corner of Church and Main. The PARC warming station will be open from noon until 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 13, and Sunday, Jan. 14. We will be serving free hot chocolate, coffee, and snacks. Also taking place at PARC is a Winter Artisans Market and other free family activities listed below.

Winter Artisans Market

Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

Open from noon until 5 pm

The Winter Artisan Market is organized by PARC-Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex to celebrate local culture, food, fashion and art during the winter months. The market will be showcasing business such as: Susan's Tart Shop, Beauty Haven (cosmetics), Jala -

Pesto, Simple Threads (DTP logo wear), Goose Neck Coffee Co. and more.

Free Performance by Weston Welch - Violinist

Saturday, Jan. 13.

12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Free Hands on Art Project - MONO-PRINTING

By College for Creative Studies

Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

1 - 4 p.m.

HOT CHOCOLATE AND CHUCKLES

by The Mitten Theater

Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

1:30 and 3:30 p.m.

Warm up from the Ice Fest with a Free improvisational comedy show for children and all ages.

Mozart's "THE MAGIC FLUTE" by Main Street Opera Theatre

Free Performances!

Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

2 and 4 p.m.

The Magic Flute is an enchanting introduction to the genius of Mozart. This space-age adaptation tells the story of the noble Prince Tamino, the heroic Princess Pamina, the birdman Papageno, the evil Queen of the Night and her assistant, Three-headed Lady. The Magic Flute's beautiful melodies and comical characters delight youngsters, while thematic points concerning facing challenges, and learning to forgive generate thoughtful discussion. This production is just under an hour, sung in English, and perfect for the whole family.

Free Dance Performances by Artistry Dance

Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

3:15 - 3:45 p.m.

For a full list of activities at PARC during the Ice Festival visit <https://www.plymouthparc.com>

RunDTP Plymouth Ice Festival 3 Mile Family Walk/Run Join us at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 13 for the RunDTP Plymouth Ice Festival 3 Mile Family Walk/Run in downtown Plymouth Kellogg Park. We gather in Kellogg Park kitty-corner from Panera. The 3-mile route starts and finishes in Kellogg Park and there are 4, 5, 6 and 7 mile routes available for those wanting to do more. See route map at RunDTP.com. Kids, baby joggers, and dogs on a leash - all are welcome. No registration required and the event is free. RunDTP is a Plymouth community walking/running group and proud to be a part of the Plymouth Ice Festival.

Amazing Wintertime Festival Food

One of the best things about being out in the winter is that you work up a great appetite. Enjoy festival favorites like elephant ears, popcorn, roasted almonds and hot chocolate. All food sales on-site can be enjoyed in the warmth of the Warming Station tables and chairs

Plymouth Ice Festival

are provided all weekend long. Looking for a meal indoors? There are so many wonderful options within downtown Plymouth - from fine dining to a quick bite, candy, cookies and ice cream! Check out www.downtown-plymouth.org for a complete restaurant listing or our restaurant guide beginning on page 26.

Warm up at the Plymouth Library:

Friday, 9:30 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Saturday, 9:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Sunday, noon until 5 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 13 at 2 p.m.

Musical performance by Lee Murdock
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in storytelling in song

www.leemurdock.com

Sunday, Jan. 14 from noon until 3 p.m.

Ice Festival Maker Fun

Come in and warm up while visiting the Plymouth Ice Festival.

We'll supply the hot cocoa, coffee, and maker activities for children ages 5-12 with their families.

Party Lot at E. G. Nick's on Forest Avenue

presented by Miller Light, Sam Adams,
Svedka Vodka, Gordon Food Service,
Samuel Adams, Leinenkugel's,
and Coors Brewing Company.

For the biggest party in downtown Plymouth, head over to the E. G. Nick's Party Lot for cold beer, drink specials, and live music. The Party Lot has become the place to be for the evening crowd - and there is always a good time to be had. Or hang out on the front patio to catch some heat, see an awesome ice bar and enjoy some Svedka Vodka specialties.

Party Lot - Hours of operation:

Friday, Jan. 12 - 7 p.m. until midnight.

Saturday, Jan. 13 - 7 p.m. until midnight

Movies at the Penn Theater:

THOR: RAGNAROK

Friday:

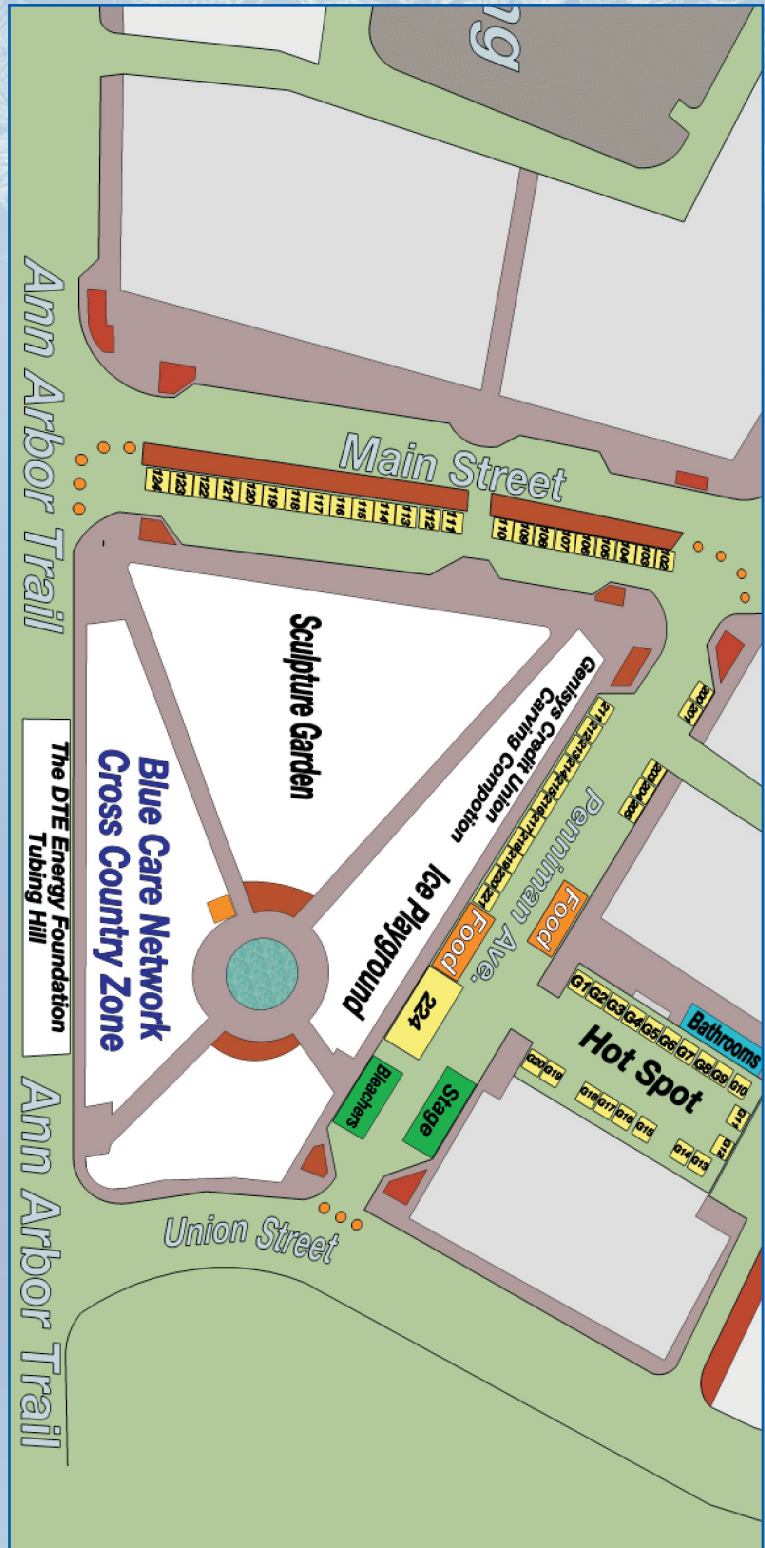
Jan. 12 at 7 p.m.

Saturday:

Jan. 13 at 4:15 and 7 p.m.

Sunday:

Jan. 14 at 4:15 and 7 p.m.



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Coming home

Professional carver's career began at festival

Julie Brown
Special Writer

His 28 years of ice carving have greatly enhanced Aaron Costic's skills and circle of professional assignments, but he still has a sentimental attachment to Plymouth, where he started his professional career. He will return to Plymouth during the Ice Festival this year, along with his team of five or six carvers, all part of a close-knit community.

"We're definitely a fraternal group," said Costic, who lives in Broadview Heights, Ohio, in the Cleveland-Akron area. "Definite sharing of ideas." As they compete, carvers also share tools, he said.

The owner of Elegant Ice Creations, Costic has traveled the world creating ice sculptures for competitions and special events.

"We did the ice for the Prince of Monaco's wedding," he said. His team saw the yachts and high-end autos on that assignment with the royal reception at the Monte Carlo casino.

The Prince of Monaco married a woman from South Africa, so the couple chose African animal sculptures for their wedding: a lion, elephant, giraffe, cheetah, and impala.

Costic, 46, has been a Plymouth show regular for many years, he said.

He started with plans to be a chef in his University of Akron culinary studies, but was quickly drawn to ice carv-



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Plymouth Ice Festival

ing. Costic has competed at the world champion level since 1997.

"One of the things is how quickly you can create a figure," he said. "It has a transparent quality." He's done a little wood carving, but really likes the artistry of ice and lights that can shine on it.

He travels the U.S. to work and compete, as well as China, Japan and Europe.

He's working with Plymouth Ice Festival organizer James Gietzen on details for the Plymouth event and anticipates traveling with a team of five or six carvers.

"It has nostalgia for me," said Costic, who started to carve in Plymouth as an amateur and advanced professionally. "I've got those fond memories."

The owner of the former Wild Wings store in Plymouth opened another store in Medina, Ohio, where Costic grew up. "We've been putting on an ice

festival there for 24 years in our central park," Costic said of Medina.

When he started carving, chisels and chainsaws were the mainstays. Costic cites the "tool revolution. That really changed the ability to do things. It changed things a lot here in the U.S."

Ice carving is also something he teaches with a twice-yearly boot camp in Charleston, W.Va.

Large creations done with a team in Alaska rank high among his creations, although he said it is challenging to

pick a favorite. Work with a spring seasonal theme is a Costic top pick, too.

"Experience really makes it fun," he tells students and other younger carvers. In starting, "you don't have the muscle memory, you don't know the techniques. I feel like I can carve anything. And that comes with experience."

Gietzen and Costic (of Elegant Ice Creations, ElegantIce.com) have plans for interactive games in Plymouth and the crowd favorite "fire and ice" towers. Costic said his ice sculpture work is both abstract and realistic.

"I'm kind of all over the place," he added.

Carving is a physically taxing job, Costic noted. Although he admits he is on the road carving less than earlier in his career, he has no plans to retire anytime soon.

"It's a seven days a week kind of job," he said.

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Familiar friends Carousel Acres will bring favorite animals to festival

Julie Brown
Special Writer

South Lyon's not too far from Plymouth, and you could say the Carousel Acres animals know the way.

"They know what they're doing because they've done it so long," said Carousel Acres owner Tammy Iaconelli. "Just jump in and off we go. A nice, sunny day in Michigan would be great."

Carousel Acres will, weather permitting, have animals at the Ice Festival 11

a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 13-14. They include a miniature horse, donkey, goats, sheep and an alpaca or two.

The farm is observing its 25th year this year, and is U.S.D.A. licensed and insured. "We have been to Plymouth for many events," said Iaconelli. "We've done the Ice Festival for years. We enjoy being part of that."

The family has about 22 acres in South Lyon, and is open to visitors in the summer as well as doing private

parties for occasions like birthdays all year. They're both mobile and animal lovers.

Carousel Acres is also home to reindeer, arctic fox, lemurs, tortoises and more. "Children, adults and all ages enjoy the animals," she said.

The Family Petting Zoo during Ice Festival will be located next to the Ice Playground,

Carousel Acres is online at carouselacres.biz or by phone at (248) 437-PONY.

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Let's Party

E.G. Nick's tent, ice bar has become festival tradition

The traditional Ice Bar, sponsored by Svedka Vodka, will return to the front of E.G. Nick's restaurant again this year during the Ice Festival.

"It just wouldn't be the Ice Festival without it," joked restaurant owners Frank Agostini and Tony Belli.

For several years, professional carvers wielding chisels, hair dryers and saws have created a bar made completely of ice outside the restaurant at 500 Forest St, where the bravest customers can plunk themselves down and order a cocktail.

"It's just a lot of fun," Agostini said. "The carvers do a fantastic job and we enjoy having the bar out there. We will, as usual, have service there with lots to terrific vodka drinks," he added. "If it's too cold, people are welcome inside, too."

And yes, Agostini said, the Party Lot will return to the parking lot in the rear of the restaurant where there will be live entertainment both Friday and Saturday nights and bar service, all in the heated tent.

"That has sort of become a tradition," Agostini said. "We always have a huge crowd and as usual, we donate the \$3 cover charge to the Vietnam Veterans of Plymouth. The veterans will be on hand checking IDs" he



added. "They are a great group and this really helps them with funding."

The tent will open at 7 p.m. both Friday and Saturday and the bands will play from 8 or so until midnight, Agostini said. Friday, Power Play Detroit will entertain and on Saturday, Smokin' Mirrors will fill the tent with music.

"We've had them before and they are really popular," Agostini noted. "It's

bound to be a really good time."

There is beer and wine service in the tent and cocktails can be purchased from the bar inside the restaurant.

"It's always fun," Agostini said. "We really enjoy the Ice Festival. It sort of tops off the holiday season. The staff has a great time, too," he said.

"We want everyone to have as much fun as we do."

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Taste of the town

While visitors to the Ice Festival come to the city to view the work of the artists who create the fantastic carvings, there are some other artists who fill the community worth a visit, too.

Plymouth has become a destination spot for those seeking a good or even great meal. Whether looking for a quick sandwich or burger or celebrating a special occasion, this is the town where serious culinary expertise is always on display. While Ice Festival visitors may be looking for a spot to get warm when it's time for a meal for couples or the whole family, there is no place better suited to serving the tastes of diners.

From a fine dining establishment serving specialty beef, a beloved hamburger and pizza place where fun abounds or even ethnic fare that delights the tastes, there is no place like Plymouth for good food and great times.

Here are a few of our very favorites...Enjoy!

E.G. Nick's
500 Forest Ave.
Plymouth
(734) 414-6400

One of the most popular places in town is always E.G. Nick's on Forest Avenue where owners Tony Belli and Frank Agostini are known for great food and for great entertainment all year.

E. G. Nicks boasts an extensive list of specially-brewed craft beers and unique cocktails, along with an impressive list of premium wines.

The menu includes items like the new Caprese ravioli, with a kale and pesto sauce that brings diners back again and again. The exceptional flatbread pizzas offer unique toppings like bacon, lettuce and tomato or Caesar salad along with the expected traditional pepperoni and cheeses. The exceptional flatbread crust on these treats has made them one of the biggest sellers on the late-night and lunch menu, Agostini said. The imaginative new dishes like the pear and spinach salad added to the menu have drawn rave reviews from regulars.

The menu still includes the customer-favorite planked whitefish, chosen as the best in the state by food critics and the award-winning spare ribs, Bang-Bang Shrimp and bourbon pot roast nachos.

Agostini said the menu includes several items which can be prepared gluten free and some vegan dishes, which are becoming more and more popular.

Local diners know that the kitchen often offers lunch specials, using fresh ingredients and weekends almost always include dinner specials, allowing Agostini to demonstrate some of the culinary creativity that he has displayed with his various TV appearances.

Meals range from \$10 to \$20 or so and are served in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. The restaurant is known for the varied menu, family-friendly atmosphere and spirit of fun, whether there is a festival going on or simply a celebration because it is Tuesday.

E.G. Nick's will have a bar carved completely of ice out front during the Ice Festival along with a huge, heated tent in the parking lot at the rear of the restaurant, where the traditional Party Lot takes place with live entertainment Friday and Saturday night.

"The Ice Festival is always a lot of fun here," Agostini said. "We love it."



Plymouth Ice Festival



Greek Islands Eatery
306 South Main St.
Plymouth
(734) 335-6303

The Greek Island Restaurant located downtown on Main Street across from Kellogg Park is not just a typical Coney Island, although the Coneys made at Greek Island have rapidly become the favorite of many locals.

The menu includes American

favorites along with many homemade Greek specialties including moussaka, pastitsio, spinach pie and gyros. They also serve a wide array of salads, pitas, sandwiches and burgers, all at great prices. There are American items and several specialty dishes on the menu.

The restaurant offers carry outs and has a banquet room and does catering.

The interior with paintings on the high ceilings draws admiring comments from visitors and the owners work at providing a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. The wait staff is always prompt and courteous and locals have come to depend on the quick service.

Greek Islands is also family friendly, offering accommodations for children and families. The location is convenient for visitors to the Ice Festival who can drop in for a hot beverage, a sandwich or a meal and then head back out for more fun.



Hermann's Old Town Grille
195 West Liberty St.
Plymouth
(734)451-1213

Hermann's is a place that simply cannot be missed. Not only because of the huge, drooling moose painted on the exterior wall of the restaurant and bar, but because of the great food and

See **Restaurants**, page 28

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Welcome to Herman's Olde Town Grille. Nick Hermann opened the OTG in September 2003. Since then, Nick and his family have worked to create a neighborhood bar and grill that the people of Plymouth can enjoy. Hermann's goal is to provide good food, good service, a friendly atmosphere and good times for their customers.

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Plymouth
(734) 451-1213



www.hermannsotg.com

Plymouth Ice Festival

Restaurants from page 27

exceptional atmosphere.

Hermann's has been a part of the Plymouth community for decades, and for decades has been celebrated as the place to go for a good time, cold beer, a delicious burger or special menu item where fun is served as a side dish with every order.

The menu includes a full selection of specialty burgers, fresh salads, oven-baked pizza and unique sandwiches, all made to order.

The OTB (Old Town Burger) comes in a variety of configurations, all of which have made Hermann's famous. There are also special menu feature items every day.

Owners Nick and Sally Hermann pride themselves on the comfortable, eclectic atmosphere where people can enjoy themselves and relax. The owners said they focus on family friends and fun at the restaurant.

Hermann's is open from 11 a.m. until 2 a.m. Monday through Saturday and from noon until 2 a.m. Sundays.

Karl's Cabin 6005 Gotfredson Road Plymouth (734) 455-8450

Built in the 1940s, Karl's Cabin is truly a Michigan Made log cabin roadhouse restaurant, bar and grill. Located just minutes west of downtown Plymouth and just east of Ann Arbor, the restaurant is a favorite of patrons from throughout the area.



Guests can enjoy rustic charm, friendly service and a large menu including hand-cut grilled steaks, fresh seafood, BBQ, fresh pasta, big salads, burgers, artisan sandwiches and daily chef-created features. Slow-roasted prime rib is served every Friday and Saturday night. Dinners are priced from \$8 to \$20 while lunch prices range from \$6-\$15.

The chef prefers to shop locally when feasible and often brings in organic and natural foods for a substantial gluten free menu. Karl's offers 20 Michigan craft beers on draft including Bell's, Founders and Short's. The extensive wine list includes 60 wines to choose from with many wines from Michigan and more than 20 wines poured by the glass.

Karl's entertainment includes dueling pianos and live bands on the weekends.

The recently renovated interior has drawn lots of compliments from the regulars who highly recommend Karl's as

offering some of the finest meals in the area. Reservations are recommended.

LaBistecca Italian Grille 39405 Plymouth Road Plymouth (734) 254-0400

LaBistecca, a premier steak house and a favorite of diners throughout the area, offers a unique dining experience featuring Piedmontese Beef, which is recommended by the American Heart Association, exclusively. The succulent and tender steaks bring area diners back again and again. Piedmontese Beef is famous for flavor and texture while having much less fat than regular beef. It offers all the enjoyment of fine steak without the guilt, owners noted.

An award-winning Wine Spectator wine list at LaBistecca



Karl's
CABIN

— RESTAURANT & BAR —



6005 GOTFREDSON RD.
PLYMOUTH
734-455-8450

karlscabin.com

Plymouth Ice Festival

is certain to please every palate as diners relax in a well-appointed dining room and lounge. The restaurant is famous for offering a fine dining experience in a relaxed, yet elegant, atmosphere. Service is always excellent by a well-trained staff familiar with the menu and able to answer any questions diners might have.

The menu includes the house-made horseradish-flavored risotto and the unparalleled short-ribs, a favorite of local restaurant reviewers.

Live entertainment begins at 7 p.m. in the lounge Friday and Saturday.

Dinner is served beginning at 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and lunch service begins at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Reservations are recommended as this is one of the most popular places in the area with a well-earned reputation for excellence and superior quality.



Leo's Coney Island
41496 Ann Arbor Road
Plymouth, Mi
(734) 416-8200

The family recipe for the famous Greek Salad dressing along with the chili and other great homemade items has been the backbone of success for Leo's Coney Island. The

Stassinopoulos brothers, Leo and Pete, have built a reputation for quality food and service.

Leo's Coney Island has evolved from a limited menu offering the basics of Coney Islands, fries, burgers and Greek Salads to a wide menu. Selections include a full line of items for the whole family including Greek specialties, breakfast, and a children's menu. Today, Leo's Famous Greek Salad Dressing can be found in specialty markets and local grocery stores. However, throughout the years, Leo's has not strayed from the formula of serving the highest-quality products and giving great service to customers. Leo has made it his mission to provide the experience of a Coney Island, while also offering delicious home-made soups and family favorites.

Leo's is open from 6 a.m. until 10

See **Restaurants**, page 30



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Plymouth Ice Festival

Restaurants from page 29

p.m. Sunday through Tuesday and 24 hours Wednesday through Saturdays.

The Inn at St. John's
44045 Five Mile Road at Sheldon Road
Plymouth
(734) 414-0600

The Inn at St. John's is a Plymouth jewel. This breathtaking landmark is the premier location for overnight stays, gourmet dining, corporate conferences, weddings, receptions, executive meetings, charity galas, and golf outings. Metro Detroit's fourth largest hotel in terms of total meeting space, St. John's welcomes both locals and travelers to experience a blend of comfort and luxury.

For an inspired dining experience in a chic, inviting atmosphere, make a date at 5ive Restaurant, located off the hotel lobby at The Inn at St. John's. Diners can enjoy a thoughtfully selected, award-winning wine list, extensive offering of local brews and al fresco dining on the terrace in season. 5ive Restaurant is open daily, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Visit www.theinnatstjohns.com to receive emails re: wine dinners, beer dinners and other special



events, Reservations at: (734) 357-5700 or www.opentable.com.

For a napkin-testing burger, visit the vintage diner-style Burger Loft, located above The Inn at St. John's Pro Shop. Making burger history since summer 2013, the Burger Loft offers a fresh take on the motif of a classic burger joint. The menu includes crisp salads, house-cut fries, and, of course, burgers done right.

A house-made chocolate brownie, lofty cookie or old-school milkshake is the perfect way to conclude a dining experience.

The Burger Loft is ideal for business lunches, casual get-



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STATION 885

885 Starkweather
 Plymouth • (734) 459-0885

M-TH: 11:00AM-11:00PM
 F-SA: 11:00AM-1:00AM • SUN: 10:00AM-9:00PM

www.station885.com

Plymouth Ice Festival

together and a "19th hole". Open during golf season from 4-9 p.m. on Mondays, and from 11:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. The loft is closed Sundays.

Station 885
885 Starkweather
Old Village, Plymouth
(734) 459-0885

Station 885 has become a tradition throughout the Plymouth area. After nearly three decades of serving great meals to families, they are obviously on the right track, according to owner Rob Costanza.

The Costanza family prides themselves on a fresh menu but never forgets the traditional dishes which have made Station 885 part of countless family events and celebrations during the past 30 years.

They serve fresh Mama Mucci pasta and hand-cut steaks along with a selection of fresh fish.

Every Monday through Wednesday, the restaurant offers half-off prices on bottles of wine and there are lunch and dinner specials from the kitchen every day.

The restaurant is located adjacent to the railroad tracks in historic Old Village.

Station 885 is open from 11 a.m. until midnight Monday



through Thursday and from 11 a.m. until 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

The restaurant also offers a special Sunday Brunch from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. which includes various breakfast items along with prime rib, fresh shrimp, salads, fruits and made-to-order crepes and omelets.

Station 885 has become a tradition throughout Plymouth during the 32 years the Costanza family has been a part of serving delicious meals to the community.

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Plymouth Ice Festival

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